

INDIANA

Indiana Motorcycle Operator Safety Education Program

► AT-A-GLANCE

► **Project Characteristics**
Motorcycle Safety Training
License Improvement
Alcohol and Other Drug
Education

► **Program Areas**
Motorcycle Safety
Alcohol and Other Drugs

► **Targeted Populations**
Returning and New
Motorcycle Riders 15 Years
and Older
Indiana Motorists

► **Type of Jurisdiction**
State

► **Jurisdiction Size**
6,000,000

► **Funding**
Section 402: \$14,000
State Funding: \$1,008,861
Student Tuition: \$155,620
Total: \$1,178,481

► **Contact**
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Problem Identification

According to National Highway Traffic Safety (NHTSA) statistics published in Traffic Safety Facts 2001, motorcyclists involved in crashes are injured or killed in about 80 percent of those crashes regardless of the level of protective riding gear used by the operator or passenger. The most effective way to reduce motorcycle injuries and deaths is to prevent crashes from occurring through a comprehensive program of rider education and training, improved licensing procedures, alcohol education, and improved motorists' awareness of motorcycles.

Starting in 1999, motorcycle sales and registrations in Indiana increased rapidly from 103,000 in 1999 to 145,000 in 2003. Even though the state training program increased training from 3,203 in 1998 to over 6,000 in 2003, the huge number of new and returning riders seeking training created a backlog for training. Providing quality rider training and education programs for all new and returning riders has emerged as major problem since 2000.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of the *Indiana Motorcycle Operator Safety Education Program* is to reduce motorcycle crashes and resulting injuries and deaths through a comprehensive rider education and training program that includes alcohol education, motorist awareness of motorcycles, and license improvement.

Program objectives include:

- Increase available training to meet public demand;
- Decrease the motorcyclists waiting for training backlog;
- Increase motorists' awareness of motorcycles statewide; and
- Reduce alcohol-related motorcycle crashes.

Strategies and Activities

The *Indiana Motorcycle Operator Safety Education Program* implemented the following strategies and activities to achieve its goals:

- Create more openings for beginning riders by offering the Experienced Rider Course (ERC) for skills test waiver. This will enable more people to train for less money in the same timeframe. Three ERC students can be trained for the same cost as one Basic Rider Course (BRC) student and in one third the time required for a BRC student.
- Implement a more flexible scheduling system that will allow for increased training whenever the demand arises. The previous beginner's course curriculum required 20 hours of instruction. The most popular schedule was a weekend course meeting on Friday night from 6:00 to

10:00 p.m., eight hours on Saturday, and eight hours on Sunday. The new BRC curriculum is 16 hours of instruction. By retaining the four hours on Friday night and eight hours on Saturday, students can complete the course by noon on Sunday. That leaves every Sunday afternoon open for the six hour ERC. Students can add the ERCs as needed.

- Propose a modest tuition increase to provide enough money to increase student training from 7,000 contracted courses in 2003 to a projected 8,000 in 2005.
- Incorporate Harley-Davidson Motor Company's Rider's Edge program as a separate, self-financed training program under the state program's jurisdiction to further increase course availability.
- Reduce alcohol-related motorcycle crashes through a cooperative effort with the Purdue Center for the Advancement of Transportation Safety, the Governor's Council on Impaired and Dangerous Driving, and local law enforcement agencies. This effort consists of three parts:
 - **Crash Causation Survey.** Survey crash involved riders to gather more detailed information on crash causation in a given year.
 - **High Crash Concentration.** Plot crash locations to identify areas that have a high crash concentration to direct more public information and enforcement campaigns.
 - **Safety Training Research.** Identify the level of motorcycle safety training and the percentage of motorcyclists involved in crashes for a given year, in order to determine what may have been lacking in the training to allow the crash to occur.

Results

The *Indiana Motorcycle Operator Safety Education Program* achieved the following results:

- Decreased motorcycle crashes, injuries, and fatalities through the program's first 12 years. Starting in 2000, fatalities started climbing due to the increase in motorcycle sales and registrations.
- Lowered crashes to 40 percent below pre-program levels; injuries are over 50 percent lower.
- Trained 20,000 students during the first ten years of the program's training efforts.
- Trained 30,000 students in response to the increase in motorcycle registration and demand for courses in the past seven years.
- Recognized the 50,000th student trained as a kick-off to the May Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Month activities in Indiana (That represents approximately 20 percent of all licensed motorcycle operators in the state).
- Recorded a decline in fatalities in 2003, after three years of increases.